



Esquimalt *Better at Home*
Community Development Final Report
January 2013



United Way helping seniors
remain independent.

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Introduction

Better at Home Program Information

“Seniors are an important and growing part of our communities, and their active involvement enriches everyone’s lives. To ensure that seniors continue to play an active role in our communities, they often need support to live independently in their own homes, surrounded by family, friends, and neighbours. United Way of the Lower Mainland supports seniors to age with dignity and with funding provided by the BC government, will manage the *Better at Home* program in up to 60 communities across BC.

Better at Home is designed to assist seniors with simple day-to-day tasks, thereby helping seniors maintain their independence and stay connected with their community. *Better at Home* is designed to be adaptable to the characteristics of a community and will address the specific needs of local seniors.”

Services will be chosen from the following basket of services:

- Light housekeeping
- transportation to appointments
- grocery shopping
- simple home repairs
- friendly visiting
- snow shoveling
- light yard work

(United Way of the Lower Mainland)

Community Development in Esquimalt

The *Better at Home* program delivery model requires partnering with local non-profit organizations to deliver the basket of services within each of the *Better at Home* communities across BC. In Esquimalt, a community development approach was taken to identify potential lead agencies willing to host the program, to determine existing competing and complementary services to the *Better at Home* program, and to customize the basket of services to reflect the needs of local residents.

The following steps were taken:

1. Compiling a neighbourhood profile that outlines the senior population group;
2. Mapping existing senior-centered and senior-identified assets in the area to determine services that match or complement the *Better at Home* basket of services;
3. Identifying regional non-profit providers of senior-centered services and volunteer centers providing similar services as *Better at Home*, as well as Esquimalt stakeholders such as politicians, health care and housing providers, senior champions and allies, etc and then interviewing them;

4. Distributing a survey through Esquimalt senior-targeting/senior-friendly businesses, organizations and associations;
5. Holding two focus group sessions with seniors;
6. Inviting stakeholders, media and potential lead agencies to attend a “Public Input Open House” to discuss the *Better at Home* program and its potential impact in Esquimalt; and
7. Gathering names of stakeholders from Esquimalt willing to participate as an Advisory Group Members once the *Better at Home* program is established in Esquimalt.

Participant Categories	# of Agencies and Seniors Involved in Process
Seniors participating in surveys, focus groups or public meeting	40
Non-profit agencies – volunteer-centers	4
Non-profit agencies – senior serving agencies	8
Non-profit agencies – Esquimalt serving agencies	2
Esquimalt Associations	1
Subsidized Housing Providers	1
Vancouver Island Health Authority Departments	1
Municipal Government Departments	2
Faith based Organizations	2
Business Owners/Staff	2

Community Meeting Process

On November 28, 2013, a publicly advertised community meeting took place at the Archie Browning Centre in Esquimalt to discuss the options for offering the *Better at Home* Program locally. Thirty-three people attended the “Public Input Open House” including seniors, staff from non-profit organizations and the Township of Esquimalt, as well as one municipal council member. In the morning, *Better at Home* staff presented information about the program and outlined the process for getting each pilot site up and running. Guests were given an opportunity to review the profile of Esquimalt seniors as well as the range of *Better at Home* services selected up to this point in time, and explore the resources and senior-services currently available to residents. Each organization prepared to serve as lead agency introduced themselves and provided a brief overview of their mission and relationship with Esquimalt residents.

After a question and answer period, small-group discussions took place regarding the basket of services being offered and which type of organization or organizations would be best suited to host the local program.

After lunch, additional input collected from the morning’s public open house was compiled and reviewed. Each potential lead agency provided an in-depth presentation about their capacity to deliver the *Better at Home* basket of services in Esquimalt and explored how they might work together.

One criteria established by seniors during the community development process was for the program to be delivered by an Esquimalt-based organization. All stakeholders agreed that it would be extremely difficult for an organization located elsewhere in the region to match the existing relationships and community support garnered by an organization that provides neighbourhood-specific programming and volunteer opportunities.

The consensus was that the lead agency be from Esquimalt. As the two Esquimalt organizations had already agreed in principal to work in partnership, Esquimalt Neighbourhood House and Esquimalt Volunteer Services were selected as the lead agencies to deliver the Better at Home basket of services in Esquimalt.

Community Profile

Esquimalt Seniors Population Profile

Esquimalt means “place of gradually shoaling waters” which is understandable given that this town on the south end of Vancouver Island is bordered on three sides by water – the Gorge Inlet to the north, Juan de Fuca Strait to the south, and Esquimalt Harbour to the west. It merges with the City of Victoria at its eastern boundary. The Esquimalt peninsula is recognized as the traditional territory of the Esquimalt Nation and Coast Salish people. In 1911, the Songhees Nation relocated from Victoria to Esquimalt and now bridges Esquimalt with View Royal at the north-western tip.



The 100 year old township is 7.08 square km and is home for 16,201 residents. In a regional district with healthy growth of 4.3% since 2006, Esquimalt is the only municipality within the core area whose population fell since the last census - a decline of 3.7%. Seniors make up just over 16% of Esquimalt’s population.

Esquimalt Seniors 2615	Age 65 to 69		Age 70 to 74		Age 75 to 79		Age 80 to 84		Age 85+	
	750		550		500		415		400	
	360 male	390 female	245 male	305 female	225 male	270 female	145 male	270 female	130 male	275 female

Source: Statistics Canada. 2012. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released June 27 2012.

Esquimalt is a steady place to live - over 46% of Esquimalt residents have been in the same house for five years or more. The township's residential neighbourhoods are primarily made up of early to mid-century built single-family homes with an infill of apartment buildings and townhouses (4415 houses and 2629 apartment units). The residential neighbourhoods are dispersed throughout the township. 50.3% of the population own their home and 47.7% rent (2006 census data).

17.1% of Esquimalt residents (those in private households) are considered to live on a low-income according to their before-tax income levels (2006 Census Profile) with a large number of seniors living alone. The majority of seniors do live with a spouse, partner and/or their children and other relatives (2011 Census Profile).



Esquimalt is home to Canada's Pacific Fleet and the Department of National Defense is a major employer in the region. Many military staff members do stay here after retirement. Eligible veterans can access funding through Veterans' Affairs to purchase any non-medical support services that they require to live independently in their own homes.

In 2012, the township was recognized as an "age-friendly" community. Esquimalt's Parks and Recreation Department has a dedicated staff member responsible for creating programming and activities for residents 50+.

Esquimalt Community Assets

The community development process identified multiple assets that could contribute to a successful *Better at Home* program in Esquimalt.

Esquimalt's Volunteer Base: Esquimalt Volunteer Services is a program hosted by the Parks and Recreation Department with a small but dedicated volunteer contingent. They match local volunteers with seniors who need drives to medical appointments or help with tax returns.

Several long-standing service organizations such as the Lion's and Kiwanis Clubs as well as the Esquimalt Legion also have loyal followers and an active volunteer base. Young people are also

volunteering and the students at École Brodeur and Esquimalt High Schools have responded warmly when help has been needed at such events as the annual Senior's Lunch.

There is also one Esquimalt resident who acts as his own *Better at Home* Program. He has a group of seniors who he "watches out for". He was mentioned several times by different people during the community development process. However, he is a senior himself and there is a limit to how many people he can help by himself.

Volunteer Victoria is a regional volunteer centre that serves Esquimalt residents who want to find volunteer positions. Their on-line database can match volunteers with volunteer opportunities based upon their specific wants and skill-sets.

Referral Systems: Although the only organization providing senior-centered services closed a couple of years ago, Esquimalt seniors do have good referral systems to access programs and services. The Military Family Resource Centre provides a wide array of support services to current and retired military personnel and also has an on-line "Family Navigator" tool that can be used by anyone in the community to locate appropriate services including eldercare.

The Seniors Entitlement Office also serves Esquimalt residents Trained volunteer advocates work to identify the avenues seniors can pursue to solve their problems. These include anything from legal, housing or pension matters to health & social services.

Seniors Serving Seniors is another regional asset. Every two years, they print 15000 copies of their Community Resource Handbook that outlines a wide variety of paid and non-paid services available to seniors.

Direct Volunteer Services Committee: The Direct Volunteer Services Committee is a community of practice for the coordinators of senior-serving programs which use volunteers to provide services. It includes staff from Oak Bay Volunteers, Saanich Volunteers, Capital City Volunteers, and Esquimalt Volunteers. This peer-group is very supportive of one another and share learning opportunities and best practices with one another.

Place-based Organizations: Along with the Township's Parks and Recreation Department, Esquimalt Neighbourhood House is also customizing programs specifically for Esquimalt residents. They primarily serve families and young children, however, their volunteer counseling service works with seniors who may be facing mental health issues.

Faith Groups: Esquimalt has six faith-based organizations. In particular, the Esquimalt United Church and the Parish of St. Paul's and St. Peter were recognized as assets in the community for their housing of a free lunch program for those in need and for their home visiting to seniors.

Existing Senior Services: There are several paid services that Esquimalt residents can access that help them remain independent. Accessible transportation programs such as HandiDart and Taxi Savers were greatly valued, as was a private driving company.

Thrifty Food's Sendial Program uses volunteers to fill the grocery orders phoned in by seniors. This program, along with Country Grocer's grocery delivery service, was regarded as one of the key programs that help seniors remain independent.

Beacon Community Services was widely recognized as the primary company providing homecare services for seniors although there are almost a dozen listed in the Seniors Directory. The Seniors/Student Work Assistance Program is a joint program between Silver Threads and the University of Victoria that matches students with seniors who need help with housework, gardening, or odd jobs. They also charge but it is a much lower cost than the private companies who will provide the same services (\$12/hour versus \$35/hour).

Esquimalt Seniors Needs Related to Non-medical Home Support Services

The vast majority of seniors in Esquimalt who expressed opinions during the process welcomed the implementation of the *Better at Home* program into their neighbourhood. A couple of people expressed surprise at the choice of Esquimalt because they felt that most Esquimalt residents did have the necessary home support services and most could pay for them. However, feedback from the surveys, interviews and focus groups suggested that there are some areas where Esquimalt seniors feel they could use a little extra help.

Meal preparation was an issue mentioned by several senior-serving organizations in the region. There was a sense that seniors are not maintaining healthy diets especially when new or evolving health changes demand a change in eating practices. Thanks to the multiple grocery delivery services provided by local stores, seniors and senior-serving organizations did not consider accessing groceries to be an issue. However, getting to the store to choose their own groceries and being able to browse the aisles was their preference.

Indeed, transportation was mentioned a great deal. There was an overall sense that Esquimalt and the local area has many senior programs and services, but getting to them was the real issue. While Esquimalt has good public transport, routes run mainly in parallel lines with no services between Esquimalt's many neighbourhoods and residential areas. HandiDart is considered to be a good alternative but is not effective for "last minute" trips or multiple stops. Transportation to a wide variety of activities aside from medical appointments was also requested such as church services, library visits and personal appointments. However, the transportation conversations revealed the desire to match seniors with regular drivers; people they can get to know and who will go into the store with them or chat with them on the way there and back. They would like volunteers to be able to make referrals for them to local programs and to provide some advocacy services as well.

Indeed, the idea of friendly visiting was very popular. Seniors wanted a regular volunteer, someone who would make a scheduled visit, someone with whom they have something in common and who they'd enjoy spending time with. If regular visitors were not an option, then seniors wanted a reassurance program – like the one operating in other areas of the region.

Volunteers phone seniors daily at a pre-determined time to check in with them. If the senior does not answer, someone will follow up.

Esquimalt is fortunate to have a temperate climate. As such, snow shoveling was not considered a major concern (checked less than a hand-full of times in the survey), but clean up after wind storms and fall leaf raking was a desired service. Sorting out and home organization appeared to be an issue for some seniors. Many seniors, especially during the focus group sessions, mentioned a need for someone to come in and help seniors re-pot plants or move furniture. Packing up old books or cleaning out closets was too much for seniors to manage on their own but having someone who could carry or move the boxes was welcomed. These tasks fell between the areas of light housekeeping and minor home repairs, but most seniors who responded felt that light housekeeping was a valuable service which most seniors could use at some time.

Assessing a senior's ability to live safely in their homes was also on the radar. It was felt that having a program with trained volunteers who could assess each home for potential safety hazards would be an asset and prevent injuries that could lead to loss of independence.

Many seniors in Esquimalt wanted the *Better at Home* program to create opportunities to develop on-going relationships between seniors and regular volunteers; someone they could trust and look forward to seeing each week. Focus group participants especially centered their conversation around the possibility that the *Better at Home* program could match seniors with volunteers who "fit" well together, who had common interests and could develop a relationship around an activity for which both sides were passionate such as story telling, walking buddies, or library visits, etc.

Suggested opportunities for service integration/coordination

Esquimalt Volunteer Services was broadly acknowledged as the organization providing volunteer-senior services and it was felt that their transportation services should be enveloped into the *Better at Home* program delivery. There was also a sense that it would be preferable for an Esquimalt based organization to host the program.

Many people recognized the valuable services provided by peer-volunteers in other municipalities and felt that the organizations might be able to work together. Given the established relationships between these organizations through the Direct Volunteer Services Committee, the possibility of sharing volunteer training or recruitment and screening practices, as well as assessment protocols for the matching process does exist.

Saanich Volunteers expressed their willingness to work with the lead agency as did Capital City Volunteers. Seniors Serving Seniors offered to adapt their existing training program for peer-counselors to include volunteers from the *Better at Home* program and The Family Caregiver's Network offered use of their networking platform, Tyze, for use by volunteers, staff and family members who support seniors to remain independent in their own homes for longer.

Community Readiness

Community Readiness

Conversations with community stakeholders, including residents, service providers, representatives from organizations, associations and government, confirmed that the Township of Esquimalt welcomes the *Better at Home* program into the community.

Nine organizations were either initially identified or self-identified as potential lead agencies to delivery the services. Of those, five were ultimately willing to consider taking on the role.

- Capital City Volunteers in partnership with James Bay Community Project
- Esquimalt Volunteer Services, hosted by Parks & Recreation Department
- Esquimalt Neighbourhood House
- Silver Threads
- The Broadmead Care Lodge

All organizations met the eligibility requirements and have experience in some facets of senior-centered programing, direct volunteer service delivery, and/or volunteer recruitment, screening and training.

Potential Risks

One of the risks facing the *Better at Home* program in Esquimalt is not having enough volunteers. The Township of Esquimalt has been operating Esquimalt Volunteers for the last several years with a very small number of volunteers. They currently have nine regular volunteers who manage about five drives per week. The outlying municipalities have their own programs so recruitment from those areas is not ideal.

Esquimalt's proximity to Vic West and View Royal might cause some confusion. There is already some service overlap between the Township of Esquimalt and View Royal residents, especially around tax preparation, so View Royal residents might want to be included. Vic West residents can access similar services through Capital City Volunteers but those services are free. Residents on the border between Esquimalt and Vic West might be confused as to who is providing what services and at what cost.

Esquimalt *Better at Home* Program Details

Esquimalt Preferred *Better at Home* Services

From the original basket of services proposed by *Better at Home*, Esquimalt seniors chose:

- Light Housekeeping
- Transportation to appointments (all types)
- Friendly Visiting
- Simple home repairs (odd jobs)

Proposed Lead Agency

The proposed Lead Agency for delivery of the *Better at Home* program is Esquimalt Neighbourhood House in partnership with Esquimalt Volunteer Services (hosted by the Township of Esquimalt's Parks & Recreation Department). Both organizations are based in Esquimalt and already recruit, screen and train volunteers for a variety of positions. Esquimalt Neighbourhood House has a long history providing community based programs with funding from United Way and they have solid management practices, long-term staff and board members who know the Esquimalt community very well. They are knowledgeable about working with vulnerable populations and have many years of developing relationships with Esquimalt organizations, First Nations and citizens.

Esquimalt Volunteers is already providing one facet of the *Better at Home* program in Esquimalt and the Parks & Recreation department is the only non-profit organization in the township providing senior-centered programming. The township's staff members are professional and already members of the Direct Volunteer Service Committee.

The Neighbourhood House and Esquimalt Parks & Recreation have a history of working together on projects. They are confident that they can implement the program together and provide a uniquely Esquimalt program.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The existing working relationship between Esquimalt Volunteer Services and Esquimalt Neighbourhood House must be formalized. Negotiations between the two organizations need to determine which group will take the role as lead agency. It is recommended that they create a detailed Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the partnership details and a process for conflict resolution. This is a new undertaking for both of them but they are currently working to finalize their plan to create a formal partnership and take on the role as lead agency for Esquimalt's *Better at Home* program.

Both Esquimalt Volunteer Services and Esquimalt Neighbourhood House are confident they have the capacity and expertise to deliver the *Better at Home* services in a professional and competent manner. However, both organizations have limited experience undertaking

assessments with seniors and dealing with in-home service delivery. From the consultations with organizations providing similar if not more limited services to seniors in adjacent municipalities, it is apparent that the lead agency will have to recruit staff members who are very knowledgeable and experienced in conducting interviews with seniors and assessing their needs. It is strongly recommended that Esquimalt Neighbourhood House and Esquimalt Volunteer Services accept the invitation by other senior-centred serving agencies to mentor and guide them in the implementation of the assessment process.

In addition, the lead agency needs to ensure Esquimalt seniors that they have a role to play in the direction of Esquimalt *Better at Home*. Creating an advisory committee that has an authentic role in guiding the implementation and best-practices for the program is critical for this program to be adopted by Esquimalt seniors and the community at large.

Appendix 1
Summary of Consultation Notes

Consultation Categories	# of Agencies/ Seniors Consulted	Names of People/Organizations
Seniors participating in surveys, focus groups, or public meeting	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 individual senior conversations • 8 seniors @ Esquimalt Lodge Focus Group • 10 seniors @ Constance Court Focus Group • 18 senior surveys (some duplicates with lodge attendees) + 5 organizational surveys • 10 additional seniors at meeting
Non-profit – volunteer-centers	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital City Volunteers • Esquimalt Volunteers • Saanich Volunteers • Volunteer Victoria
Non-profit – senior serving agencies	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Caregivers Network • James Bay Community Project • Seniors Entitlement Services • Seniors Serving Seniors • Silver Threads • The Lodge at Broadmead • Westshore Seniors Information Resource Centre <p>Not able to attend meeting: Beacon Community Services</p>
Non-profit – Esquimalt serving agencies	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esquimalt Neighbourhood House • Military Family Resource Centre
Esquimalt Associations	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Legion Esquimalt Branch Seniors Group <p>Not able to attend meeting: Esquimalt Lion's Club</p>
Subsidized Housing providers	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Victoria Housing
Vancouver Island Health Authority	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esquimalt Health Nurse <p>Not able to attend meeting: Department of Family Practice</p>
Municipal and Provincial Government	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township of Esquimalt Mayor and Council member • Esquimalt Parks & Recreation Staff <p>Not able to attend meeting: MLA Maureen Kariaganis</p>
Faith based institutions	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Paul's • Good Shepherd Catholic Church
Business Owners/Staff	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Renaissance Retirement Residence • Esquimalt Barber Shop

Appendix 2

Esquimalt Community Assets for Seniors

	Senior Services	Cost
Yard Work/Home Repairs	Private Garden & Home Repair Services	\$ - Market Rates
	SWAP - Seniors/Student Work Assistance Program	\$12/hour
Groceries/Meal Provision	Country Grocer Home Delivery Program <i>-seniors must go into the store to shop</i>	Free
	Thrifty Foods Sendial Program <i>-seniors can phone in grocery order and it will be delivered</i>	Free (eligibility requirements)
	Private Meal Preparation Companies x 3	\$ - Market Rates
Friendly Visiting	The Anglican Church of St. Peter & St. Paul	Free
	Nurse Next Door	\$ - Market Rates
	Reassurance Services (private security companies x 4)	\$ - Market Rates
Housekeeping	Beacon Community Services (VIHA funded)	\$ - VIHA-set Rates
	Private Home Support Companies x 11	\$- Market Rates
Transportation	BC Transit	\$1.65/ride
	HandyDART	\$ 1.75 - 2.25/ ride
	TaxiSavers	\$ - discount coupon
	Driving Miss Daisy	\$ - Market Rates

	Senior-Centered/Friendly Organizations	Program Type
Senior Serving	Seniors Entitlement Office	Advocacy
	Seniors Serving Seniors	Resource Directory Peer Counselling
	Silver Threads	Senior programs
Place Based	Esquimalt Neighbourhood House	Counselling Family Programs
	Esquimalt Parks & Recreation Department	Social/recreational
Faith Groups	Anglican Church St. Peter & St. Paul	Senior visiting
	Esquimalt United Church	Rainbow Kitchen Free Lunch
	Queen of Peace Parish	Senior visiting
Volunteer Referrals	Esquimalt Volunteers	Driving to medical appointments Tax Returns
	Volunteer Victoria	Volunteer Matching

Appendix 3

Documentation of media coverage

Esquimalt Poster Campaign



For more details or to register,
please contact Lilaine at
250.220.7363 | betterathome.ca

November 28, 2012

9:45 am to 1 pm (lunch provided)
Archie Browning Centre
1151 Esquimalt Road

Esquimalt Poster Locations:

- Esquimalt Recreation Centre
- Greater Victoria Housing Society Buildings (Grafton House, Constance Court, Esquimalt Lion's Lodge)
- Esquimalt Churches
- Esquimalt Hair Salons/Barbers
- Esquimalt Medical Clinic
- Esquimalt Denturist Office
- Esquimalt Pharmacies
- Royal Canadian Legion
- Esquimalt Bingo Bingo Hall

MEDIA RELEASE

November 23, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Seniors in Esquimalt Stay Home Longer Thanks to New Service Program

ESQUIMALT, BC – Seniors in Esquimalt will be able to remain longer in their homes thanks to a new support service program called *Better at Home* provided by the United Way and the province of BC.

Earlier this fall, the United Way of the Lower Mainland announced the City of Esquimalt will be among the first 18 sites to offer the *Better at Home* program – a ground-breaking initiative that provides seniors with non-medical services such as housekeeping, grocery shopping, friendly visits, yard work, home repairs, snow removal and transportation to appointments.

In order for the program to roll out, United Way is hosting a public meeting on November 28, 9:45 am to 1 pm, Archie Browning Centre, 1151 Esquimalt Road to see if the community is interested in the service and to hear from non-profit agencies willing to step forward to lead the development and delivery of services. Esquimalt seniors and their family members are invited to attend and lunch is provided. Registration is required. Contact Lilaine Galway at Lilaine@uwgv.ca or 250-220-7363.

The local non-profit agency chosen to deliver the *Better at Home* program will create the operational structure to register seniors and offer the services, which will be delivered primarily by a network of volunteers. Fees for services will be based on an ability to pay and local market conditions, and in some cases will be offered free of charge.

As part of *Improving Care for B.C. Seniors: An Action Plan* that deals with the needs of seniors and an aging population in our province, the B.C. Government provided the United Way with \$15 million to establish *Better at Home*. The selection of potential communities was based on demographics, local conditions, and consultation with provincial health authorities, regional United Ways and local agencies serving seniors.

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For more information, please contact:

Lilaine Galway
United Way Greater Victoria
Ph: 250-220-7363 Email: Lilaine@uwgv.ca





Photograph by: Bruce Stotesbury, Times Colonist

Behind the wheel of his 1930 Ford Rumble seat coupe, Esquimalt resident Dino Fiorin dresses up in period costume with Esquimalt Mayor Barb Desjardins, left, and Janet Jones. Esquimalt celebrated its 100th anniversary on September 8, 2012.